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ABSTRACT

There are several statements that may be made concerning the black administrator in higher education today: (1) the black administrator is important not only to black colleges but to white institutions as well, and his role will be especially critical in the next 10 years or so; (2) the supply of black administrators is extremely limited because of the historic lack of opportunity for both training and placement; and (3) the black administrator must possess skills to cope with not only the normal administrative duties assigned but also the special demands placed upon him by virtue of his blackness, particularly in predominantly white universities. From these assumptions several implications emerge: (1) it is imperative that a valid theoretical and practical approach for the training, education, and development of black administrators be conceptualized and implemented; (2) short- and long-range recruitment efforts to increase the supply of black administrators must be mobilized; and (3) training opportunities must be developed or revised that will help prepare young black men and women for the multiple roles that they will be called upon to play. (HS)

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THE BLACK ADMINISTRATOR IN HIGHER EDUCATION: CURRENT DILEMMAS, PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES

A PAPER PRESENTED TO THE FIRST NATIONAL CONGRESS

OF

BLACK PROFESSIONALS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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I am delighted to have the opportunity to this conference, because I feel it is high time for us to get ourselves together. The issues we are confronting here today have been argued far too long on the cocktail party circuit. Finally we are attempting to deal with them in a formal organized way, and I applaud that attempt.

I think that many of us at this conference may be suffering from what Alvin Toffler has termed "future shock"[1] Twenty years ago the Brown decision was still ahead of us. Ten years ago we were just on the edge of the civil rights explosion and the agonies of bombings, assassinations, riots..... Few of us who lived through the past two decades could have guessed that today we would be holding this conference to deal with the role of blacks in higher education. But the tides of change have moved so rapidly that we find ourselves in desperate need of these few hours to stand still and look at where we have been, where we are now, and how we are to meet the future rushing towards us. Perhaps it is not too much to say that what we discuss in these few days is important to black survival.

Administration, the particular aspect of higher education about which I have been asked to speak, is in itself a topic of enormous concern and controversy. Students and parents, especially those who are black and poor, have shaken off their resignation and apathy about an educational system which is destroying them. Many of their attacks, and rightly so, are on teachers and professors, but the focus of protest is usually the administration. College presidents and school

superintendents all over the country are sitting on volcanoes, and they know it. It is no help, in their precarious position, to point out that their decisions are not independent arbitrary actions, but simply "a moment in a process," as Mary Parker Follett put it.[2] To the enraged public, which knows that things have gone badly wrong, the buck stops on the administrator's desk. He may or may not be responsible for the way things are, but he had better be able to change them.

Some of the controversy is symptomatic of an even deeper confusion which exists today, and that is about the purpose of the educational enterprise we call a university. Clark Kerr has wittily described the complex strands from which the American pattern of higher education has been woven. There is the English model, of course, with its emphasis on gentility and classical studies. There is also the German model, in which scientific research rules the hierarchy. And there is the essentially American schema which places a high premium on public service. All universities share the conflicts engendered by the lack of clarity or basic disagreements about purpose. As Kerr puts it, "A university anywhere can aim no higher than to be as British as possible for the sake of the undergraduates, as German as possible for the sake of the graduates and research personnel, as American as possible for the sake of the public at large--and as confused as possible for the sake of the preservation of the whole uneasy balance."[3]

This confusion becomes particularly apparent, as those of you from urban universities will recognize, when the university is faced with demands for new programs or services. Students, community groups, government agencies and faculty members all have their own ideas of the contributions which the university can and should make to solving various urban problems. The demands may be unrealistic, the arguments irrational--but they are results, not causes, of the university's uncomfortable uncertainty about its identity and mission. Scholarship, research or service? Can it manage all three? For whom? How?

Running a university, or a department or a program then, is certainly no task for the faint of heart or weak of mind--or, for that matter, of body. The patience, insight and sheer stamina required are simply incredible. Attempting to elucidate current demands on university administrations would by itself be a formidable task. When we add the enormously complicated question of the black role in administration, it becomes almost impossible to know where to begin. It was for these reasons that I approached this assignment with some trepidation and much humility. I think that at the outset I should make clear several assumptions upon which the rest of my remarks today will be based. Or to say it another way: to tell you where I'm coming from, where my head is at.

First, the black administrator is important, not only to black colleges, but to predominantly white institutions, and his role will be

especially critical in the next ten years or so.

Second, the supply of black administrators is extremely limited, because of the historic lack of opportunity for both training and placement--a situation now exacerbated, ironically, because of the current competition from many sectors for trained and competent blacks.

Third, the black administrator must possess skills to cope with not only the normal administrative duties assigned, but also the special demands placed upon him, particularly in predominantly white universities, by virtue of his blackness. Dubois said it another way:

> The immediate program of the American Negro means nothing unless it is mediate to his great ideal and the ultimate ends of his development...
> We must seek in legislature and Congress remedial legislation: national aid to public school education...
> Only the publication of the truth repeatedly and incisively and uncompromisingly can secure that change in public opinion which will correct these awful lies...
> We must watch with grave suspicion the attempt of those who, under the guise of vocational training, should foster ignorance and menial service of the Negro for another generation.
> It is our duty, then, not drastically but persistently to seek out colored children of ability and genius to open up to them broader, industrial opportunity and above all, to find that talented tenth and encourage it by the best and most exhaustive training in order to supply the Negro race and the world with leaders, thinkers and artists. [4]

From these assuptions, several implications emerge. First, it is imperative that we conceptualize and implement a valid theoretical and practical approach for the training, education and development of black administrators, whatever their roles.

Second, we must mobilize a short-and long-range recruitment effort to increase the supply of black administrators.

Third, we must develop or revise training opportunities which will help prepare young black men and women for the multiple roles which they will be called upon to play. By the way, I have purposely included black women here. The hang-ups many whites and some blacks have on this subject are counter-productive and should be discarded. Our past survival is due in large measure to the incredible skills, persistence and courage black women have developed, and any forward movement we make as a people will require their best efforts. We need all the leadership we can get, and whether it emerges in women or men is beside the point. So I'm not going to deal at this conference with a pseudo-issue which I refuse to discuss even at my favorite cocktail parties.

Historical Perspective

Before I proceed to expand on these assumptions and the conclusions I have drawn from them, I would like to make a brief detour into the past, by way of lending an historical perspective. It is hardly necessary for me to recount to this audience the development of higher educational opportunities for blacks. Many of you here are more familiar than I am with that story. But I think we need reminding of our past, as we attempt to understand our present. For many years, of course, black colleges comprised virtually the sole means for blacks intent on obtaining post-secondary education.

Indeed, as late as 1968, almost 80% of the baccalaureate degrees awarded blacks students were granted by black colleges, and almost 50% of the graduate or professional degrees.[5] Earl McGrath emphasizes in the initial pages of his study of Negro colleges that if young black people are "to receive any higher education, the institutions now primarily serving Negroes must for a considerable span of years, provide it."[6]

People may argue, as they do, about whether these colleges were founded to assist newly freed blacks assume their rightful role in a free society or to reinforce segregation and subservience. The fact remains that black colleges have performed heroically in providing education for generations of black people and that they have done do in the face of overwhelming odds against their very survival. To this day, they have been starved for funds--and have, therefore, had poor facilities and low salaries. They have had to engage in enormous amounts of remedial work because many of their students came from schools organized around planned inferiority and academic deprivation. And make no mistake about it: it was planned, overtly in the dual school system in the South and covertly in the ghettos of the North. The deliberate design has been alluded to and documented by such diverse writers as Ambrose Caliver, Horace Mann Bond, Henry Allen Bullock and in the monumental work of Gunnar Myrdal. Dubois, again the visionary, said years ago that:

> The Negro Race, like all races, is going to be saved by its exceptional men.... Now the training of men is a

> diffcult and intricate task. Its technique is a matter for educational experts, but its object is for the vision of seers. If we make money the object of man-training, we shall develop money-makers , but not necessarily men; if we make technical skill the object of education, we may possess artisans but not, in nature, men.[7]

But most whites, especially the philanthropists, were not interested in the training of "men" and thus a tragic cycle was initiated.

Students in black colleges and even the alumni have rarely been in a position to support them, through high tuitions or generous bequests. Financial weakness in the colleges and lack of demand for trained blacks in a segregated and discriminatory society combined to limit their offerings to "safe" fields, like education, social work and religion. Even the few professional schools were limited to providing training for those careers which could be pursued in the black community: medicine, law, theology. The tragic cycle was repeated over and over: ambitious young blacks had no opportunity to study advanced science or business administration, and the white graduate schools or employers were provided with an easy "out" for their lack of black students or employees.

But regardless of their crushing problems, black colleges did and continue to provide us with the vast majority of educated black leaders. From their alumni have come not only the well-known spokesmen for the whole spectrum of black consciousness, but also the quiet supporters for the thousand-and-one projects and programs attempting to gain freedom, opportunity and power for black people.

Let's look at what black institutions have done, for instance,

in providing professional training. Now it is quite clear that blacks are still under-represented in all the higher professions. For instance, only two percent of this country's practicing physicians are black. The proportion of attorneys is extremely unequal: one for every 750 whites, but only one black attorney for every 5,000 blacks. The story is similar for other post-baccalaureate programs: only about 1.72 percent of graduate enrollment is black, and of all the Ph.D.'s granted between 1964 and 1968, only .78 percent went to blacks. But without Meharry and Howard, the record would be unimaginably worse. These two are still providing the vast majority of black doctors and dentists. The Carnegie Commission on Higher Education reports that "in 1968-69, out of 35,000 M.D. candidates in the nation, 393 were at Howard and 269 at Meharry. Less than 1 percent of the students in other medical schools were black...out of 15,408 dental students enrolled, 136 were at Meharry and 310 were at Howard. Only 21 of the 50 dental schools, other than Howard and Meharry, had any black students, and most of these had only one."[8] Despite the fact that these figures are beyond dispute, at a recent social event one of the affluent white "liberals" present refused to accept their validity. He offered no refutation other than his contention they were inaccurate! He could not accept the fact that in the 1970's, black institutions were still carrying the major burden of providing black professionals in law, medicine and dentistry, not to mention basic undergraduate education for blacks.

Meanwhile, we need to recognize another development which poses the danger of reducing rather than expanding access of black youth to higher education--the integration of institutions which were formerly predominantly black. Once again quoting the Carnegie report: "Among historically black colleges, three recently reported that more than 50 percent of their students were white: Bluefield State College, 69 percent white: West Virginia State College: 73.3 percent white: and Lincoln University, Missouri, 50.8 percent white."[9] Similarly, Marvland State College became part of the University of Marvland, and nine predominantly Negro junior colleges in Florida were closed in order to integrate their students into white junior colleges. We had better be aware of facts like these when we are tempted to write off black colleges. Without their herculean efforts, I doubt that we would be meeting here today. At least our agenda would be quite different from the one before us.

Instead, thanks to the leadership and support of students and alumni from black institutions, we are finally beginning to see the shattering of old patterns of segregation. Indeed, we are facing what some people have called a "brain drain"--black students are in demand and black graduates are in demand--not only by white universities, but by other private and public agencies, government and business. That's where the idea of future shock comes in, I think. Only a few years ago, we were all busy saying "Excuse me, please, I'd like to become less invisible," and suddenly today we

are staggering under the klieg lights of frantic talent searches and upward bounds and opportunity programs and God knows what other efforts to identify and grab talented and trained blacks. Already the winds of reaction are stirring--complaints that special treatment for minorities is unfair and the resurgence of discussion about racial superiority and inferiority. For example, witness the recent controversy surrounding the Jensen articles on racial factors in intelligence.

But the worst reaction to the ironies of the present day, in my view, is a kind of detached amusement at the scrambling of some elements of white society to make up for its past sins. I don't think we have time to waste in anger that these efforts come so late, too late for many, many people. And I'm not prepared to worry about motivation for the belated efforts to rectify past injustices. As long as educational and professional doors are now opening--and stay open--to young blacks, it simply doesn't matter to me who is opening them or why. If someone else's guilty conscience or liberal aspirations are involved, that's his problem, not mine. If we are serious about ensuring the equality so long denied us, then we must sieze every opportunity. The point is to shape events, and not, as we so often have done, let them shape us.

The Role of Black Administrators

That takes me back to the assumptions I mentioned a moment or two ago. The first was that the black administrator is important

whether he works in black or white settings, and consequently we need to devote considerable thought and energy to defining his responsibilities. College or university administration is, as I indicated earlier, a gigantic headache. All administrators, black or white, in whatever kind of institution, are going to have to cope with increasing enrollements, but particularly with increased black enrollment. One projection is that it may double in the next thirty years, from 450,000 now to 750,000 before 1980.[10] While costs continue to escalate, money will have to be found--in competition with a plethora of worthy causes--for more buildings: dormitories, labs, classrooms, libraries, and the ubiquitous administrative offices themselves. Meantime, courses, programs and students services will have to be expanded, while debate continues over the style of learning, the scope of the curriculum, and the type of grading--to mention by a few of the current topics. Somewhere, someone will have to be thinking about the nagging questions I posed earlier about the purposes of the university, and making policy decisions about the proper allocation of resources for teaching, research and service. But do not let these figures of increased enrollment deceive you.

> According to recent census reports the number of Blacks in college increased by 123% between 1964 and 1970: from 234,000 to 522,000. But only 6% of the undergraduates in the U.S. are black and of this number almost one half attend Black colleges. A recent Ford Foundation Report says that a real disparity still exists: To bring Blacks into parity with whites based upon their percentage in the general population, the number of Blacks attending college must increase 116%; for Puerto Ricans the increase must be 225%; for Chicanos or Mexican-Americans 330% and for American Indians, 650%.[11]

Black administrators in black institutions have their special tasks. They must recognize the weaknesses of the black colleges, while appreciating their strengths, particularly in stimulating and motivating black youth. They must understand their historic role in providing education for the economically and educationally disadvantaged. They must recognize the particular contributions black colleges have made to the black community, not only in staffing its institutions, but in providing direct services: Howard and Meharry, for instance, in the field of health care: Fisk, in counseling: Xavier, in early childhood education. Perhaps the most agonizing and important task--about which I will have more to say later--is participation in the debate over the future of the black college and to help determine its role in the years ahead. Just as the black colleges have served as the custodians of the archives of the black experience in America, so they must, "capture the spirit and momentum now surging in the black community and...provide intellectual leadership and direction." This requires, as the LeMelles put it, "an unswerving determination for realistic renewal, including painstaking self-analysis and the disposition for radical departures to attain purposefulness."[12] The prerequisites for this task are an ideology and design for the progressive development of black higher education. Comparisons with other institutions or some mythical mainstream are fruitless: evaluation must take place in terms of special conditions and particular pos-

sibilities. Administrators must understand that blacks in general and black colleges in particular, have been as much influenced by non-educational forces as by educational ones: accreditation, lack of job opportunities. As basic responsibility of black administrators and their faculty colleagues is to contribute knowledge of the circumstances of black life in the United States.

The black administrator in the white institution has an equally difficult, if different, set of tasks. First, perhaps, he is a visible symbol of black achievement and potential power to students and faculty, and an ambassador of the university to the surrounding community which, in urban areas at least, may very well be black. He must make himself available as counselor, confidante and advocate to black students on the campus. He must attempt to bring about institutional change in program and policies in order to provide greater relevancy and opportunity for blacks and other members of minorities. He must encourage or even engage in research on educational opportunities for blacks, and he must assist, by whatever means possible, his younger brothers and sisters to seek and find the help they need. It may mean, for example, that the black administrator in a predominantly white institution must argue for and convince that institution that the costs of educating a black student who went to a rotten school are considerably higher than the costs for educating a white middle-class student who attended a good secondary school. And the black administrator must play this

role without apology, without begging or acting out the Uncle Tom role. These rotten schools do not exist by accident, you know. But in addition to his commitment, the black administrator must be informed and knowledgeable. The Maryland State College system, for an example, will attempt to take those extra costs into account in their budget allocations.[13] One's arguments are strengthened considerably if they are supported by facts and experience.

Now the kinds of job descriptions I've been giving would scare off most people, but I don't think any purpose is served by pretending that college administration is a soft spot for easy riders. And I don't think any of us can say: well, I'll be an administrator, period, or a black man, period. We have to be both, and we have to be damn good at both. The duality is there, whether we like it or not. We must not only live with its pressures, but take advantage of them if blacks are to come into their own as administrators and as men. The nature of the black experience in this country may well be the defining characteristic of each black person. Everything he is and does is influenced by his being black, which is, of course, why identity is such a crucial issue to us. Harold Cruse, in his book The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual, puts it this way: "The Negro intellectual must deal intimately with the white power structure and cultural apparatus, and the inner realities of the black world at one and the same time.... He cannot be absolutely separated from either the black or white world."[14]

We have risen to challenges before, and I think we can again,

but the challenges today are far more subtle and infinitely more important than in the past.

Recruitment

Recruitment is the next issue for consideration. There aren't nearly enough young black men and women who are trained and ready to take on the kinds of monumental jobs I've been describing. That's partly because no one told them there were jobs available and partly because no one went looking for them. But, partly it is because when people were trained, the jobs were not available. But there are places to look, places to advertise. First, there are young people who are coming through the schools right now, and are waiting for the word on a job that counts. Graduate students or younger faculty members in our own institutions....school personnel in central staff or line positions in our public school systems....people working in civil rights organizations or government agencies....business and industry personnel.

Part of the reason educational administration is <u>in</u> trouble, let alone has trouble finding good people to do the job, is because it continues to think in terms of scholars or educators. But I never have seen the sense in promoting a good teacher right up the line until he lands in some office like payroll or public information. And why should a Ph.D. in romance languages spend the rest of his days arranging rosters? If the job of administering school systems or colleges requires skills in planning, accounting or community relations, then let's begin by scrapping some of

our old ideas about the mystique of the educational fraternity and get people who have the skills we need to back up the teaching/learning process.

Selection on the basis of paper and pencil tests alone, admission requirements, certification and all of the other conventional methods are turning out to be a losing proposition, not only in mind, but by decision of some of our leading jurists.[15] Experience, demonstrated ability for the job at hand--not for something else,--and commitment are far more important in my book than a piece of paper which says someone is in the guild or has attended the right number of courses. I think part of what I'm getting at is the need for generalists: people who can operate in a variety of ways, who can improvise, who can analyze data and come up with alternatives, who can use their experience in one field to draw analogies in another area....It's funny how when programs like Model Cities, NSP's or CAP's get started, bright young people come out of the woodwork. (The problem is that they don't stay still--they move on to further study or better jobs so fast that turnover is a huge problem).

For ten years or more, civil rights groups of all persuasions have been turning college kids and street people into articulate leaders and competent staffers. So have some of the political campaigns. Returning black veterans--those lucky enough to get into our shamefully few training programs--have proved perfectly cap-

able of handling both college work and jobs simultaneously. So let's not make assumptions, which are demonstrably false, about not having enough bright ambitious young blacks around. What we have to do is go out and beat the bushes to find the many who are already there.

Training

A third problem is that of training people for the multiple roles black administrators must play. This is really a two-part question: What instruction or training is required? and How is it to be supplied? First, then: the content. As I've already indicated, I don't believe all administrators need to be scholars or even educators. But they do need to understand systems, organizations and institutions. They need to have a grounding in goal setting and planning; they have to be able to conceptualize, develop and implement--by which I mean, I guess, having their heads in the skies but their feet on the ground: their minds on the future their feet on today. And they need to understand both organizational behavior and individual behavior, as they attempt to cope with and interpret the institution to students or to the community and, indeed, to themselves and their colleagues.

I'm firmly convinced that the best kind of training is done on location, based in reality. I would strongly advocate field experiences or internships for prospective administrators--whether in educational institutions or some other kind of setting, such

as Federal, state or local governmental offices or in business or industry.

The second part of the training question is how to get it done. One prospective source for funds is the proposed National Foundation for Higher Education, a part of the current Senate bill on higher education. If that bill ever sees the light of day, there may be the possibility of a considerable amount of money for developing institutions and for individual students, and we had better do our homework to get ready for that possibility. Private sources, such as foundations, are already doing part of the job by providing minority group members with special training and experience packages, and the success of these efforts will hopefully encourage expansion.

It would be a great mistake, however, to wait for someone else to develop programs and then ask us in. A large measure of the responsibility--and the power to act--lies with those who are here today. Existing black institutions which are geographically related need to pool both their problems and their resources. The Atlanta consortium comes to mind as an excellent example of a group which has already moved on this, but perhaps not fast enough. Obviously, a group of colleges can provide far better training opportunities together than any one can alone.

According to the Carnegie Commission Report, there are 105 predominantly Negro colleges. And since the great majority

of these is in the South, the possibilities for regrouping and realignment are feasible. Even more, they are becoming mandatory in view of the financial facts of life. When I read, for instance, that enrollment in black institutions ranges (or did in 1968-69) from a high of 9,222 at Southern University (publicly funded) to a low of 64 at Virginia Seminary and College (privately funded)[16]-- I have to ask whether some painful decisions need to be made. But there are too many sad instances of black colleges who would apparently rather wither and die than face the prospect of possible loss of identity in a cooperative situation.

Last December, the New York Times, in reporting the increasingly severe financial pressure on private black colleges, quoted one college president as saying that if he advocated merger with a neighboring college, he'd be tarred and feathered.[17] Much more realistic, in my view, was the response of Dr. Daniel Thompson, head of Dillard's sociology department and a colleague of mine in a U. S. Office of Education program. Dr. Thompson favors extensive mergers and consolidations among black private colleges, stating that "the only reason many exist is because of the sentiments of their old graduates." Hard words, but nothing is to be gained by pretending the facts are other than they are.... and the improved performance of black institutions is too important to be ignored.

To return to the immediate question of providing training

opportunities, let me say that potential black administrators need experience in white institutions as well as black. There is, therefore, a similar need for imaginative new alliances between black colleges and their white neighbors. Not only is this justifiable from the practical standpoint, but it is a cultural necessity as well. If pluralism is to be a healthy reality, not just a stand-off, there are few better places to begin than in our world of educational administrative training and experience.

I think publicly-funded institutions have a particular obligation to initiate the kind of new arrangements I have in mind, but that is not to say that private colleges do not have a responsibility. And let me emphasize that I am not talking simply about "paper" cooperation: I'm interested in specific commitments which lead to concrete action. For instance, one important factor in the limitation of black professionals to what I called "safe" occupations has historically been the narrow range of the curriculum at black colleges. Black students could not qualify for graduate training in many fields, such as physics, mathematics and economics, because they had had no opportunity to take the courses pre-requisite to advanced study. That alone closed off opportunities almost as much as segregation and discrimination.

Now, the response need not necessarily be one of building new departments into black colleges. Instead the continuing need may very well be met through the establishment of transitional year programs, such as those at Wharton and Yale, which provide

potential graduate students with the appropriate "bridge" to graduate school. It may also be met through inter-disciplinary and regional centers, operated by consortia and staffed in part by experts in various fields who are not interested in becoming full-time faculty members, but who can teach on a part-time basis. And as I mentioned elsewhere in this paper, there is room for vast expansion of the kind of intern/study year programs which permit promising leaders to learn new skills without starving in the process. For the last couple of years, for example, the Rockfeller Foundation has been taking a number of young minority group administrators and placing them as interns for six months with one school superintendent and six months with another. During this year-long period, during which they are exposed to various styles of leadership and the whole range of public education problems, they also have the opportunity to meet with one another and with several consultants to help them interpret their experiences.

My point here is this: we have some data and some ideas about appropriate training--not only for administrators, but for all kinds of professionals. But we have to have our agenda perfectly clear, so that we can go out and get the action we need. When people ask "What can I do?," let's be prepared to tell them! And, I might add, to really test their commitment.

I think black colleges, in particular, have to learn to develop multiple styles of leadership, if young administrators are

to learn the full dimensions of their jobs. I think we as blacks ought to know something about the disasters which befall a group which has placed everything in the hands of a single leader: King, Malcolm, Garvey.

Black colleges have been notorious for their centralized administrations. One commentator noted wryly that black college presidents have been so fully in control that they have come to mistake omniscience for omniscience. There are reasons for that, of course--Tobe Johnson, for instance, in his article in a recent issue of Daedalus, has succinctly described this phenomenon in terms of the need for centralizing power in an institution threatened by its environment,[18]--but it is not my purpose to explore the whys and wherefores here. What is important is that black colleges, as well as white ones, make conscious efforts to bring in younger men and women and make them an integral part of the policy making process. And they must do this without succumbing to the "assistant-to" syndrome, which places young people in positions of much status and little power--and results in defusing their energies and abilities entirely. Even more dangerous is the co-optation by the white establishment of young blacks to serve as "the spook who sat at the door." Read Sam Greenlee's book by that title, and you'll see the diabolic potential unleashed by that ploy.[19]

What I am trying to say, in sum, is that the range of possibilities for sharpening administrative skills is limited only by

our imagination, our energy and our willingness to risk ourselves in untried situations. I haven't even mentioned the opportunity offered by cooperation with business and management firms. I personally would be more impressed by a potential employee who had learned his personnel practices or budgeting procedures from a successful industry executive, rather than from a professor of administration. But unfortunately, professors of administration--regardless of the fact that they have never had to meet a payroll, bargain collectively, or please consumers and investors--still have a strangle hold on the training of most of our future colleagues.

The Real Responsibility of the Black Intellectual

The problems of recruitment, selection and training, however, important as they are, are minor and technical. We may have to exercise some ingenuity by going out to beat the bushes to find youngsters to serve as tomorrow's administrators. We may have to change entrance requirements and offer new forms of assistance and academic help. We may have to devise new training strategies. But those things can be done, with a relatively small investment in planning and development.

The crux of the matter is really to think through what it means to be a black in a position of influence and power in these rapidly changing times. I mentioned earlier some of the special tasks which a black administrator must undertake, and I'd like to return to that again. Today, as never before, black people

in this country--and indeed around the world--are looking to black intellectuals for leadership in understanding and interpreting their own identity, the meaning of racial differences, the role of the black man in history, and the significance of the black experience. A great deal of nonsense has emerged as part--some would say an unavoidable or even necessary part--of the arousing of black consciousness. Some of it has been spouted by the self-proclaimed community leaders, whose authority comes only from the shades and daishikis they wear. But more serious is the rhetoric unleashed by more prestigious and influential blacks, and sanctioned by still others--the net result of which is to confuse and divide the black community at the very time when it has its first real opportunity to move forward together.

Certainly we understand that socio-economic conditions and racism are among the causes of such irresponsible behavior, but we cannot afford the luxury of intiating it, condoning it, or wishing it away. There must be programs to deal with the causes, but there must also be ways of reclaiming those from the pathological state in which they find themselves: neither of these can be done by denying their existence. After all, Malcolm X reclaimed his identity, his humanity and his blackness, and in so doing, led many others out of the wilderness of self-hate and despondency. And interestingly enough, he did this under the most difficult and compromising condition: in prison.

I'm thinking for instance of the kind of sloganeering which demands the release from jail of all blacks because they are "political prisoners," Certainly there are some political prisoners black and white as well. But there are also black murderers and thieves and rapists behind bars, who are there because they have plundered and tried to destroy black people and black property. Are we to stand aside and countenance such arrant dishonesty in the name of some black ideology? I say hell no! After all, who suffers most from these actions? Blacks, that's who.

Or think of all the nonsense that has been expressed about gangs. Some blacks act like some Italians who want us all to believe that the Mafia doesn't exist, and that if it does, it doesn't include any Italians. Certainly there are white gangs, too--but they are not my number one priority here. I'm talking about the dangerous reality of black gangs who roam the streets terrorizing their own neighborhoods, ripping off their own people. Look at the Philadelphia statistics on gang violence: they're about blacks killing blacks. You can't make that reality disappear by dishonest reporting of the facts or sentimental theorizing. Then again there's the question of relevance, a word heard far too often in educational circles these days. I think I know at least as well as anyone here about the real irrelevancies in our schools: the stupid courses, the idiotic rules, the dead bodies where warm teachers should be, dehumanized and turned off youth. But I refuse to sit still for anyone who wants to tell

black youngsters that they can "shuck and jive" their way through school--and right on to the street corner--because physics, mathematics and foreign languages may not be "relevant" to the black soul. The godforsaken mess in most of our cities is crying out for engineers, chemists architects, planners, doctors, lawyers and every other kind of expert to get it cleaned up. Ask yourself who lives in the mess, for the most part? Blacks, that's who. And it's time we got some young blacks busy learning the chemistry and physics and math and whatever else it takes to become the experts, who can deal with these problems. Don't tell me a course in algebra is irrelevant if that will help you get to be an electrical engineer. Don't tell me a course in economics is irrelevant if that's what you need to be a banker. And above all don't tell me punctuality and neatness and accuracy are all middle-class values which are irrelevant to us....There are some black parents out there who have struggled, suffered and cried too much to put up with that kind of gibberish from the very people they hope will help their kids.

As Ron Dellums said in his 1971 address to the National Urban League Convention in Detroit: "It's not revolution and guns which make black people get up every morning and face what they have to face to survive. It's hope, baby, hope."

Again and again I've heard so called experts on economic development sounding off about making it without white leadership or money. We'll go it alone, we'll build our homes and train

our managers without whitey, goes that song...and I don't know whether to react with pity because of such gigantic naivete or blinding anger at such misuse of the trust of aspiring blacks of all ages.

I hesitate even to mention the explosive topic of black studies, so intense are the arguments and counterarguments. But I am deeply disturbed by the blind alleys up which so many of our people--students, in particular--are being led in the desperate and needed attempt to develop pride and dignity.

One such blind alley is the romanticizing of past, the emphasis on what Orlando Patterson, writing in a recent Harvard Educational Review, called the "contributionist thesis."[20] This position states--no doubt with the sincerest intention of developing black pride--that black peoples were major participants in the shaping of Mediterranean and thence Western European civilization. Patterson tersely dismisses this historical fantasy as untrue, ideologically bankrupt, and theoretically deficient--a summation with which I must agree. Once again, intellectualizing dishonestly is worse than not thinking at all. But there is another blind alley: the insistence on linking Black America to a real or mythical African past. W. E. B. DuBois posted the warning signs years ago when he wrote: "Once and for all, let us realize that we are Americans, that we were brought here with the earliest settlers and that the very sort of civilization from which we came made the complete absorption of

Western modes and customs imperative if we were to survive at all· in brief, there is nothing so indigenous, so completely 'made in America' as we."[21] And Imamu Baraka, still known to many as Leroi Jones, adds: "The paradox of the Negro experience in America is that it is a separate experience but inseparable from the complete fabric of American life....In a sense, history for the Negro before America must remain an emotional abstraction."[22]

I suppose these theories, the contributionist and the African Fatherland and others like them, might not matter so much if they were simply part of the jargon of professional journals and conference papers. But what makes them so damned dangerous is that they are parroted and taken seriously by young people who are trying frantically to get their bearings. Instead of providing sympathetic and sane advice and examples, too many of us have abdicated our responsibility, and the fools and the charlatans have taken it on. I'm haunted by the story I heard from one black college president not long ago. He told me that he looked out his window late one night to see one of his better students tearing up the grass on the college green. When the student was invited in and asked what he was doing, he replied: "I'm planting food to feed all the hungry brothers and sisters." Whether that particular trip was caused by drugs or something else is beside the point. What matters is that our brightest young people today are being bombarded with false in-

formation, conflicting theories and misleading signals without any corresponding method for evaluating them or sorting them out.

I could continue at length to indicate examples of the kind of propagandizing which is being inflicted on us all. In my view it is a symptom of black intellectual bankruptcy. Harold Cruse is perhaps the most perceptive and biting analyst to date who has spelled out the dimensions of our problem: "The Negro movement is at an impasse precisely because it lacks a real functional corps of intellectuals able to confront and deal perceptively with American realities on a level that social conditions demands."[23] Even more brutally he lays bare the hollowness of much Black Power rhetoric, accusing its proponents of innocence at best and total confusion and ignorance at worst. "The radical wing of the Negro movement," he writes, "sorely needs a social theory based on the living ingredients of Afro-American history....(Their view) is predicated not on any profound theoretical or scientific examination of historical facts but on passion, emotionalism and prejudice...They have no understanding of economics as a science or the different schools of economic theory and how to apply them to the Negro movement....Some do not even know what economic theory is, while others do not want to be bothered with it. Despite their vaunted anti-Americanism, they are more American than they think. Congenitally pragmatic to the core, they are anti-theoretical.

Thus, the white power structure does their economic theory and practice for them...."[24]

A challenge like that deserves a response, though not in haste or in self-defense. Blacks in administrative positions, as well as on the faculties of our institutions of higher education, have the right and duty--and I think the ability--to begin making that response.

Three years ago, Tilden and Wilber LeMelle in their book The Black College put it this way: "Along with the black American community generally, black higher education in the United States is....approaching its first real chance to clarify its purpose and relate itself without ambivalence to the goal of total development for black Americans....In the United States, the crisis of confidence which finds black Americans hostile and unprepared to accept the studies and conclusions of white scholars as valid analyses and interpretations on any aspect of being black in America underscores the imperative for black scholars to assume the responsibility they have abdicated in the past."[25]

The Urban League has done an excellent job of taking the same data which was used by Dr. Patrick Moynihan in preparing his report on the "pathology" of the Negro family and using it to point up the strengths which have enabled it to survive. Similarly, the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education in

calling for a $40 million per year investment in black colleges has interpreted data on the subject--as have a number of other scholars--and arrived at diametrically opposite conclusions from Jencks and Riesman. Tracts such as their "Educational Disaster Land".[26] must be understood, analyzed, appreciated and suitably ignored. But our work must be circulated well beyond the conference rooms and private papers: the point is not only to do the interpretive work that needs doing, but to see that the conclusions receive the kind of publicity which the Moynihans, the Jencks and the Riesmans obtained. Only when accurate and serious thinking filters down to the community level, especially to our youth, will it begin to have the pay-off that counts.

Much of this may sound strangely unrelated to the topic of administration. But I cannot intellectually or emotionally separate leadership from administration. The former is broad-ranging and comprehensive: the latter is mechanical, technical, limited and sterile. What black colleges need is administrative leadership, not mechanical administration which merely keeps the institution in operation. Perhaps the demands on black administrators in predominantly white institutions are even greater. Not only must blacks in their positions do all the things other administrators do; they must also confront and move the black agenda of opportunity and hope forward at every juncture, often in the face of confusion, fear, prejudice and outright hostility.

And what specifically can be done to move our agenda forward? I suggest that this conference go on record as recommending:

1. That the proposed National Foundation for Higher Education be established as included in legislation now pending before the U. S. Congress and that this Foundation provide a minimum of forty million ($40,000,000) dollars each year to black institutions of higher education. And further, that the director or the co-director of the National Foundation of Higher Education be black.

2. That the predominantly white medical, dental and law schools be encouraged to institute programs which, within the next three years, will enroll qualified black students in the approximate percentages which reflect their percentage in the general population. And further, that members and institutions represented at this conference make their services available to predominantly white institutions attempting to achieve this goal.

3. That predominantly white institutions with large black enrollments employ at least one black administrator at the policy-making level of university administration. In practical terms, this means at the level of vice-president.

4. That within the next six months, black institutions of higher education located within the same geographic area, convene a work conference to consider the advantages of cooperative programs, regional centers, exchange programs and possible coordination,

consolidation and merger in the interest of better meeting the need for quality higher education for black students.

5. That a follow-up conference of black administrators in black institutions of higher education and black administrators in predominantly white institutions be convened to discuss mutual interests, problems, concerns and at the same conference, to develop a ten year program or agenda for action aimed at implementing the overall goal of black equal educational opportunity in the 1970's.

6. That concrete plans be developed within the next twelve months for regional centers - located in the South, East, Middle West and Far West - established for the specific purpose of training black administrators for all kinds of institutions of higher education. And further, that one of these regional centers be located in the Atlanta University complex, a natural location for such a center planned, developed and directed by black people.

7. That this conference dedicate itself to, not only interpreting the black experience in America, but also that it rededicate itself to the ultimate goal of black liberation in its broadest sense which means understanding that the future of black intellectuals and administrators is intimately and inseparably tied to the future of Black America now and forever more.

There are both short-range and long-range goals which we must identify and for which strategies must be charted. We must talk about curriculum changes in the black colleges, and cooperative arrangements with nearby colleges. We must develop formal networks for exchange of information and services, such as placement of graduate students and, later, beginning career people. We must think in terms of providing higher education for nearly one million blacks by 1980 and perhaps two million by the year 2000. We have to accommodate them, teach them and provide access to the whole gamut of professional and occupational futures. We have to establish a climate where secure and sound leaders can develop and flourish. That is our agenda and it is not one which will be completed easily or overnight. But if not us, who? If not now, when?

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